

Parkinson's UK is the largest member-led charitable funder of Parkinson's research in Europe. So far, we've invested more than £80million in ground-breaking research.

Purpose and scope

- Our [small grants scheme](#) provides funds for small-scale research projects and pilot studies.
- Applications are invited for grants of up to 24 months and for a maximum of £50,000.
- Small grants are not to be used to top-up existing grants.
- We're keen to receive applications from researchers working across all fields of Parkinson's research.
- Funding for cohort studies is not available through this grant scheme. Please see our [website](#) for information on how we fund these types of studies.
- Projects with solid target validation and identified early-stage chemical leads, or suitable for a hit-finding campaign, may be considered for the Parkinson's UK Drug Discovery Programme. Before making an application in this area, please contact the team on researchapplications@parkinsons.org.uk.

Eligibility

- Grants are tenable at a UK university, NHS trust, statutory social care organisation or other research institution.
- Principal applicants should hold employment or honorary (if a clinical academic) contracts with the host institution that extend beyond the period of the grant.
- Applicants may be at a relatively early-stage of their research career or be new to Parkinson's research.
- Co-applicants and collaborators may be based at institutions outside the UK and / or at pharmaceutical or biotech companies.
- Applicants should read [Research grant terms and conditions](#) before completing the application form.

Application procedure

- Application deadlines vary and are listed on our website. Applicants will receive funding decisions within 12 weeks of submission.
- All applications must be made in English.
- Grant applications to Parkinson's UK are made through the charity's [online grant application system](#).
- Applicants are not required to submit a hard copy application.
- In order to avoid formatting problems, text from other documents should be pasted into Notepad (or similar programme) before being copied into the application form.
- If the project includes work with patients please ensure a letter of written support is supplied from a clinical collaborator.
- Any relevant 'in press' articles should be attached as appendices.
- Applicants will receive confirmation from the online applications system once an application is submitted. Unless the charity requires further information, no correspondence will be entered into until the results are notified. Applicants are requested not to initiate contact with the Research team during the review process.

Costing the application

- Applicants must justify the funds requested.
- Applicants must apply for funding in British pounds sterling.
- Applicants should seek the advice of their institution's Finance or Research Office on costing the application well in advance of the application deadline. Online submissions of the application are sent directly to Parkinson's UK.
- In line with the Association of Medical Research Charities guidelines, Parkinson's UK will only reimburse directly incurred research costs for awarded grants as per the application submitted. **Please read our [guidance on research costs](#).**

- **Staff costs:** Basic salary should be stated for each individual. Provision for London weighting, superannuation and National Insurance should be shown separately in the space provided. An appropriate grading and salary must be quoted even where a named assistant cannot be specified; both grading and salary should have the approval of the appropriate administrative officer of the institution where the assistant would be employed.
- **Research expenses:** Details must be given. Small grants do not cover administrative expenses, costs for attending conferences or publishing costs. Please see our guidance on [open access publishing](#).
- **Animals:** The species, number and unit cost of all animals must be shown.
- **Biological materials (such as human tissue or cell lines):** Please specify.
- **Equipment:** Please specify each piece of equipment requested.
- **Inflation:** Inflation will not be paid in year one; inflation in year two is allowable up to 3%.

Review procedure

- Applications will be reviewed initially by three members of the charity's Small Grants [College of Experts](#) (SGCOE) up to four lay grant reviewers (people affected by Parkinson's). Reviewers score applications on a scale from zero to ten.
- Applications will be shortlisted based on the combined average scores of the panel members and lay grant reviewers.
- Applications which involve non-human primates, cats, dogs or equines will be sent for additional expert 3Rs review by the [NC3Rs](#).
- The shortlisted applications will be considered by College of Experts members at a teleconference.
- The Panel's recommendations for funding will be submitted to the charity's Chief Executive for approval.
- Applications will be judged by external peer reviewers and panel members against the following criteria:
 - importance and relevance of the research
 - potential impact of the research for people affected by Parkinson's
 - scientific quality of the proposal
 - quality of the researcher and team
 - value for money
 - budget and infrastructure
- A good plain English summary is essential for evaluation by lay grant reviewers (please see p3) who will judge applications against the following criteria:
 - the importance and relevance of the research for people affected by Parkinson's
 - the potential benefit of the research for people affected by Parkinson's
 - if the proposed research involves human participants, whether they think people would be likely to take part

Unsuccessful applications

- Edited comments from the combined reports of lay grant reviewers and panel members will be made available to unsuccessful applicants. No further discussion with Parkinson's UK staff or with members of the College of Experts is allowed.

Email: researchapplications@parkinsons.org.uk

Call: 020 7963 9376 or 020 7963 3950

Visit: <http://www.parkinsons.org.uk/researchgrants>

Writing a research grant application

We only fund the best quality research so that every penny donated towards research will benefit people with Parkinson's. We receive a high volume of applications in each grant round, so it's vital that you make your application stand out from the crowd. Below are some tips and pitfalls to avoid when writing your grant application to give yourself the best chance of success.

Make a good first impression

- Read the 'Information for applicants' document for the appropriate grant scheme.
- Read the Parkinson's UK research grant terms and conditions – make sure your requests are allowable by Parkinson's UK.
- Give all the information required in the correct format - Arial typescript, size 11pt.
- Ask at least one independent person to proofread your application – reviewers dislike typographical and grammatical errors.
- Ensure figures make sense and are correctly referenced in the text.
- Make sure everything in your research proposal is correctly referenced.
- Even if your ideas are excellent, a badly presented application may make reviewers wonder if this is an indication of how the research will be conducted.

Write a good plain English summary

- Our lay grant reviewers bring the unique and valuable perspective of people affected by Parkinson's into the funding decisions made by Parkinson's UK. It ensures that their needs and interests are reflected in our research.
- Researchers may not have personal experience of Parkinson's and therefore may not consider some of the issues that are highlighted by people affected by the condition. This is why the input of lay grant reviewers is so important. Applicants are similarly encouraged to seek the views of people affected by Parkinson's as part of their submission process.
- Lay grant reviewers may have considerable personal experience but little specialised scientific knowledge, so it is important that you think carefully about your lay reader when writing your plain English summary.
 - The plain English summary must accurately reflect the research proposal and scientific abstract. Applicants should be realistic about the potential outcomes of their research and the likely timescales involved.
 - Avoid using jargon, abbreviations and technical terms wherever possible – if you have to use them provide a clear explanation.
 - Include a good glossary.
 - Avoid complicated English or uncommon words.
 - Avoid elaborate explanations of 'what is Parkinson's'. They are very likely to know a lot about this and want to know about the particular research project.
 - Use active not passive phrases, for example say 'we will do it' rather than 'it will be done by us'.
 - Keep sentences short - try not to use more than 15 to 20 words per sentence.
 - Break up the text, for example by using bullet point lists.
 - Ask someone without a scientific background to read your draft and advise if anything is unclear.
 - If your study involves participants ensure you have included details of what will be involved for them and how they will be supported.
- You can find more tips on writing a good plain English summary on the [Make it Clear campaign website](#).

Clearly demonstrate how your research relates to Parkinson's

- Parkinson's UK only supports research into Parkinson's. We want to fund research that has the greatest chance of improving the lives of people with Parkinson's.
- Applications at the 'pure science' stage must clearly demonstrate how their research relates to Parkinson's and how it could provide valuable insights for future research.
- Peer and lay reviewers have a lot of knowledge of Parkinson's and will usually have considered many applications over the years. They expect applicants to demonstrate a good understanding of Parkinson's. Applicants whose expertise and publications record primarily relates to another field should

seek to collaborate with relevant experts in Parkinson's and people affected by Parkinson's where necessary.

- Parkinson's UK will consider applications which may provide insights into a number of neurodegenerative conditions, but again you will need to show the particular relevance to Parkinson's.

Ensure your research proposal is clear and logical

- Make sure your hypotheses are clear and firm and are reflected clearly in the methodology.
- Show how the various experiments and stages of proposed research relate to each other.
- Give clear information on what the outcome measures will be.
- Identify and address any potential challenges or pitfalls – what will you do if your first proposed experiment doesn't result in the outcome you expected? Or if you have challenges with recruitment or retention of participants?
- Provide sufficient detail on the experiments and how they will be carried out to show your understanding of what you're doing.
- Give realistic sample sizes and power calculations based on evidence.
- Clearly describe the future clinical benefits and timescales of practical improvements that could result from the research.
- Ensure your application includes details of how the results of your research will be made available to others.